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STATE FOR EEB/ESC DMONOSSON, OES/EGC GTHOMPSON, IO/EDA RWEBBER

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TAGS: [ECON](#) [ENRG](#) [KGHG](#) [KNNP](#) [SENV](#) [TRGY](#) [CI](#)

SUBJECT: CHILEAN ENERGY MINISTER TOKMAN ENTHUSIASTICALLY SUPPORTS
U.S. DECISION TO REVISIT IRENA MEMBERSHIP

REF: STATE 59971

11. (SBU) SUMMARY: The Ambassador personally relayed ref points to Chilean Minister of Energy Marcelo Tokman June 11. Econoff and Econ Specialist delivered the demarche to Carlos Pina, head of international affairs at the Chilean National Energy Commission (CNE). Tokman told the Ambassador that he was "very pleased" the U.S. was reconsidering membership, as the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) needed both U.S. and UK participation. He noted that although the UAE proposal to host the IRENA headquarters was strong, Chile was obliged to vote for the German proposal. The Minister reported Chile had yet to select a candidate for IRENA Director General, but he was confident it would be a European. Tokman posited that one prime focus of IRENA should be capacity building in developing countries. He said he would be discussing these issues with Department of Energy Assistant Secretary for Policy and International Affairs David Sandalow in Peru June 16. Tokman also noted he was looking for a way to bring Secretary of Energy Chu to Chile in the near future. END SUMMARY.

Change In U.S. Policy Welcomed

12. (SBU) On June 11, the Ambassador personally conveyed demarche points to Minister Tokman regarding U.S. willingness to reexamine membership in IRENA. Embassy staff followed up at the working-level with CNE. Tokman told the Ambassador he was "very pleased" the U.S. was reconsidering participation in the Agency. The Minister was planning to attend the Egypt meeting, as Chile was a signatory country. Tokman was convinced IRENA needed the U.S. and UK. He underlined that U.S. participation at the Egypt meeting would be extremely well received.

Chile Will Support German HQ

13. (SBU) Tokman reported to the Ambassador that United Arab Emirates FM Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayid Al Nahyan had personally come to Chile to lobby for an IRENA headquarters (HQ) in the UAE. The Minister admitted the UAE proposal was probably the strongest among countries vying for the IRENA HQ. He noted the UAE was willing to contribute \$50 million per year for the first 7 years of the HQ's existence. Despite this strong proposal, Tokman said Chile would be unable to vote for the UAE because of its commitments to Germany. (Note: Germany provides Chile with a substantial amount of aid in support of developing renewable energy. End Note.)

IRENA Future: UAE HQ, European DG

14. (SBU) The Ambassador asked for Tokman's thoughts on how the

choice of an HQ and Director General (DG) would play out. The Minister believed the UAE would ultimately win its bid to host IRENA's HQ. In addition, he thought the next DG would be French, Danish, or Spanish. Chile had not yet decided for whom to vote. Tokman believed these results would send a "great signal" to the rest of the world on the relevance and importance of renewable energy as a global issue.

IRENA Focus: Capacity Building

15. (SBU) Tokman noted he planned to talk about these issues with Assistant Secretary Sandalow in Lima, Peru on June 16. In particular, the Minister was anxious to capitalize on one of IRENA's key goals, capacity building in developing countries. He emphasized that this was the key to promoting renewable energy around the world.

16. (SBU) Tokman also noted, as an aside, that he and his staff were looking for a way to bring Secretary of Energy Chu to Chile in the near future.

SIMONS